13. (New)   A method for gathering information comprising:

reading bar-code data by a bar-code reader connected to a terminal enabling communication with a communication network;

storing said bar-code data in a memory in said bar-code reader;

adding identification data stored in a data memory in said bar-code reader to said bar-code data in said memory, said identification data individually specifying said bar-code reader;

transmitting said bar-code data with said identification data to said communication network;

receiving said bar-code data with said identification data by a host computer connected to said communication network; and

storing said bar-code data with said identification data transmitted from said bar-code reader in a storage provided in said host computer.

14. (New)   The method for gathering information according to claim 13 further comprising receiving said bar-code data with said identification data stored in said storage in said host computer by at least one local terminal connected to said communication network.

15. (New)   The method for gathering information according to claim 13, wherein said bar-code is a micro bar-code a thinnest black bar of which being approximately 100μm in width.

REMARKS

The applicant has added new claims 6-15 so as to present different aspects of the present invention. No new matter is added by way of these new claims. Claims 6 and 11 are supported in the Specification at page 7, lines 1-17. Claims 8 and 13 are supported in the Specification at page 10, lines 5-25. Claims 9 and 14 are supported in the Specification at page 14, lines 2-10. And claims 7, 10, 12, and 15 are supported in the Specification at page 6, lines 18-27.

In the Office Action dated October 23, 2002, the Examiner has determined that claims 1 to 5 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,446,871 to Buckley et al., (hereinafter "Buckley"). However, the Applicant believes that the inventions claimed in claims 1-5 have distinguishable features over the cited references. Detailed explanation in this regard will be given below.

As the Examiner admits, one aspect of the present invention is a data output device for transmitting information data including bar-code data, which is read from a bar-code, to an external computer comprising:

bar-code reading means for reading the bar-code data;

data storing means in which identification data for individually specifying the data output device is stored; and
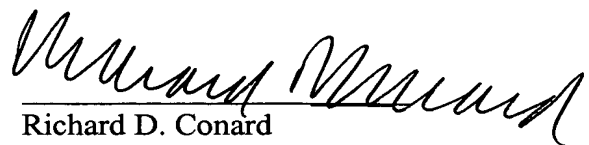
control means for transmitting information data which is generated by combining the identification data with the bar-code data read by the bar-code reading means.

The Examiner has pointed out that Buckley discloses the method and apparatus for reading and storing reference codes and subsequently retrieving information identified by the reference codes as mentioned in Page 3, Lines 4-6 of the Office Action. However, Buckley fails to teach the "data storing means in which identification data for individually specifying the data output device is stored," thus the present invention cannot be anticipated by Buckley. In the same manner, the remaining independent claims 4, 6, 8, 11, and 13 cannot be rejected under 35 USC §102(e) because the inventions of those claims also comprise the above data storing means (or data memory). Accordingly, Applicant believes the present inventions according to the pending claims may not be rejected under 35 USC §102(e).

For at least these reasons, Applicant believes claims 1-15 to be in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments that would speed prosecution of this case, he is encouraged to call the undersigned at (317)231-7285.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be necessary in connection with this response to Applicant's undersigned counsel's deposit account 10-0435 with reference to Applicant's undersigned counsel's file 29973-68355. A duplicate copy of this authorization is enclosed for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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